



United States Department of State

Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration

Washington, D.C. 20520

April 24, 2012

At Work and Ready to Go

Dear colleagues and friends,

It is with great pleasure that I can say that I have officially joined the State Department's Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM). As the recently-confirmed Assistant Secretary, I am honored to lead a Bureau that protects and provides life-saving assistance to tens of millions of people whose lives hang in the balance due to persecution, oppression, and violence.



As I begin my tenure, my priorities for the Bureau have not changed since [my confirmation testimony](#) before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee five months ago. These are:

- Integrating humanitarian issues into the Department's overall conduct of U.S. foreign policy;
- Working with other parts of the U.S. government to ensure that our country sustains a vibrant refugee admissions program—to rescue lives while enriching the fabric of our nation—while carrying out effective security screening.
- Ensuring that commitments made by President Obama and Secretary Clinton to help and protect women and girls and other vulnerable people around the world are being incorporated into the design and operations of aid programs overseas.

Already in the short time since I've started, I've met with a number of international and non-governmental organizations that inform our work or serve as partners in carrying out PRM-funded programs. These have included meetings on the overall international humanitarian system or "architecture," on the U.S. refugee admissions system and on preventing and responding to violence against women and girls. Foreign officials who oversee relief and development programs in their own countries have already visited, including representatives from the United Kingdom, Jordan, Canada, Finland, and The European Union. In the coming days, I will meet with UN High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres when he comes to Washington and expect to meet soon with representatives of other international organizations. We're putting finishing touches on testimony I'll give to Congress this week for a hearing on refugees fleeing violence along the border between Sudan and South Sudan.

The change in bureau leadership does not alter the important work that PRM staff undertakes everyday in Washington and around the globe. Right now, for example, PRM colleagues are tackling the humanitarian aspects of crises in Syria, the Horn of Africa, Sudan and Mali. The bureau also represents the United States in international fora where discussions are held on a diverse range of topics, from trends in flows of migrants to fostering peace and stability to promoting healthy and educated populations in other countries.

I am fortunate to work with such a dedicated and experienced team. PRM's staff members are viewed by others in the State Department as humanitarians and problem solvers, who do not shrink from challenging situations. I am especially grateful to Ambassador David Robinson who ably acted as Assistant Secretary for six months.

In early May I will make my first overseas trip as Assistant Secretary. First stop will be an important conference on Afghanistan sponsored by the UNHCR in Geneva. I will then travel to the Middle East to see PRM-funded programs in the field, including programs for displaced Iraqis, Syrians and Palestinians. This will also provide an opportunity to meet with policy-makers and senior officials from governments and organizations that are involved in providing safe haven for people in need.

There are many other events and initiatives on my priority list for the coming months, leading up to World Refugee Day in June.

Because it's so important to us to be able to communicate with our community and our stakeholders, in addition to [PRM's Facebook page](#) and [website](#), we're now on Twitter under the handle [@StatePRM](#). It truly is a pleasure to be here and I look forward to our continued collaboration.

Best regards,



Anne C. Richard
Assistant Secretary for the
Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration



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